

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

The following listing of the claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application.

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Currently Amended) The ~~sleeve ladder~~ of claim † 21, wherein the sleeve is a cylindrical sleeve having a predetermined length and a predetermined diameter.
3. (Currently Amended) The ~~sleeve ladder~~ of claim † 21, wherein a cross-section of the opening is circular.
4. (Currently Amended) The ~~sleeve ladder~~ of claim † 21, wherein the first surface is an inner surface.
5. (Currently Amended) The ~~sleeve ladder~~ of claim 4, further comprising ~~wherein the sleeve further includes~~ a second surface concentric with the first surface.
6. (Currently Amended) The ~~sleeve ladder~~ of claim 5, wherein the second surface is an outer surface.

7. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim † 21, wherein the sleeve includes one of solid rubber and cellular rubber.

8. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim † 21, wherein the first surface includes a plurality of grooves.

9. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim 7, wherein the cellular rubber includes closed cell rubber.

10. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim 7, wherein the cellular rubber includes open cell rubber.

11. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim 10, wherein the open cell rubber includes foam.

12. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim † 21, further comprising wherein the sleeve further includes a slit that extends from the first surface to a second surface of the sleeve.

13. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim 12, wherein the slit extends from the first end of the sleeve to the second end of the sleeve.

14. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim 1, further comprising wherein the sleeve further includes a fabric layer connected to a second surface of the sleeve.

15. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim 14, wherein the fabric layer is waterproof.

16. (Currently Amended) The sleeve ladder of claim 14, further comprising wherein the sleeve further includes a fastener connected to the fabric layer.

17. (Currently Amended) A ladder, comprising:

a first side rail;

a second side rail opposite the first side rail;

a rung connected to the first and second side rails; and

a sleeve that covers a substantial portion of the rung between the first and second side rails.

18. (Original) The ladder of claim 17, wherein the sleeve is removable.

19. (Original) The ladder of claim 17, wherein the sleeve includes a grooved surface in contact with the rung.

20. (Currently Amended) A ladder, comprising:

a first side rail;

a second side rail opposite the first side rail;

a rung connected to the first and second side rails; and

means for covering a substantial portion of the rung between the first and second side rails.

21. (New) The ladder of claim 17, wherein the sleeve includes:

a first end;

a second end opposite the first end; and

a first surface in contact with the rung, wherein the first surface defines an opening extending from the first end to the second end.